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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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USSR

1. Embassy reports curbs on foreign air travel within USSR:

[redacted] military staff.

Embassy Moscow considers it possible that a large airlift into Siberia and the Far East may be the cause of added travel restrictions which have been imposed on members of its

The trend was first observed a month ago, and travel eastward is hardest hit. Other directions affected include Odessa. The official Soviet excuse for placing curbs on air travel is the need to give priority to the movement of freight, the consequent diversion of aircraft for hauling cargo and the resulting shortage of passenger space.

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Comment: Restrictions on the movements of the Embassy staff within the USSR are of long standing and are part of the Soviet internal security pattern.

[redacted] Additional difficulties may have arisen in recent months from freight priorities on air transport for the Soviet Government's big construction projects, such as the Main Turkmen canal east of the Caspian, and the Volga-Don canal in the Stalingrad area.

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3. Syrian Prime Minister issues statements favorable to the West:

[Redacted]

The new Syrian Prime Minister has issued statements to the local press which reveal a favorable attitude toward the West. He is quoted as saying: "Arabs cannot face the dangers of this perplexed world alone. Neutrality is imaginary when we are weak . . . I do not advocate alignment with the Western bloc for love of this bloc, but to repel the dangers threatening my country."

The Prime Minister, however, also has cautioned that there is a great difference between his beliefs and government policy formulated by the Cabinet.

Comment: The forthright and realistic statements attributed to the Prime Minister are in sharp contrast to the neutralism and open anti-Westernism so commonly voiced in Syria. The Army and its Chief of Staff are the real rulers of Syria; there is no evidence that they have assumed a pro-Western attitude.

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EASTERN EUROPE

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4. Plans reported for marked expansion of Polish Merchant Marine:

[redacted] the primary objective of the Polish Merchant Marine is to expand its present 270,000 ton fleet to 600,000 tons. To achieve this goal, Poland

must resort to the purchase of shipping from outside the orbit. The expanded fleet of ships is expected nearly to double the twelve ships currently plying the China trade routes.

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Comment:

[redacted]

the re-organization of the Polish Merchant Marine at the beginning of 1951, as well as increasing Soviet control over most of its activities. The Polish Merchant Marine consists of at least 59 vessels, either owned or under charter -- a 40 percent increase since September 1950. Twelve of these ships have been identified in commerce with Communist China.

There is little likelihood, however, that Poland will be able to increase the number of its ships plying Far East routes, for since June 1951, bunkering facilities have been denied Polish ships at most refueling stations. Only Socony, whose facilities are temporarily limited by the Iranian oil crisis has offered to bunker Polish ships at Port Said and Suez.

WESTERN EUROPE

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5. Coal trains to West Berlin are stopped by East Germans:

[redacted]
The Soviet-supervised East German Reichsbahn suddenly refused to permit the movement of extra coal trains to Berlin on 17 August,

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stating that the facilities were needed to move the harvest, and that Berlin has enough coal. These trains had been carrying over 15,000 tons of coal a week from the Ruhr to West Berlin, by agreement between the East and West Germans.

Comment: This move may be a Soviet retaliation to the West's action in bringing legal East-West German trade to a halt on 3 August. The retaliation was probably deferred until the close of the Berlin Youth Festival. In January of this year, the East Germans closed the Mittelland canal lock, through which Ruhr coal had previously moved, and since that time coal shipments to Berlin have been difficult. West Berlin has a
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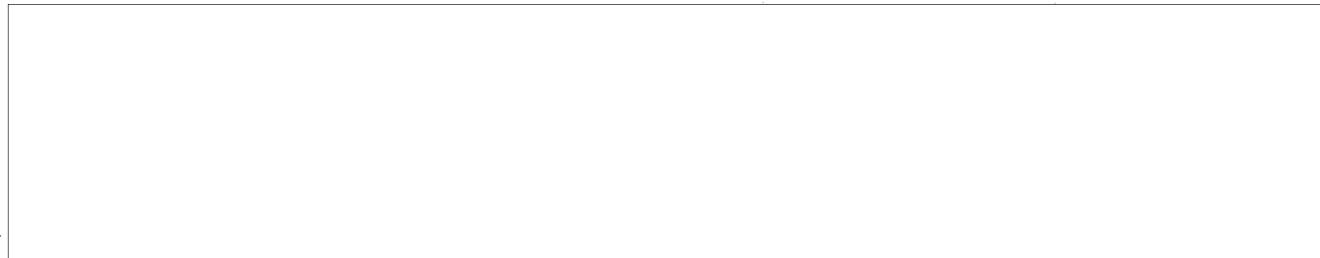
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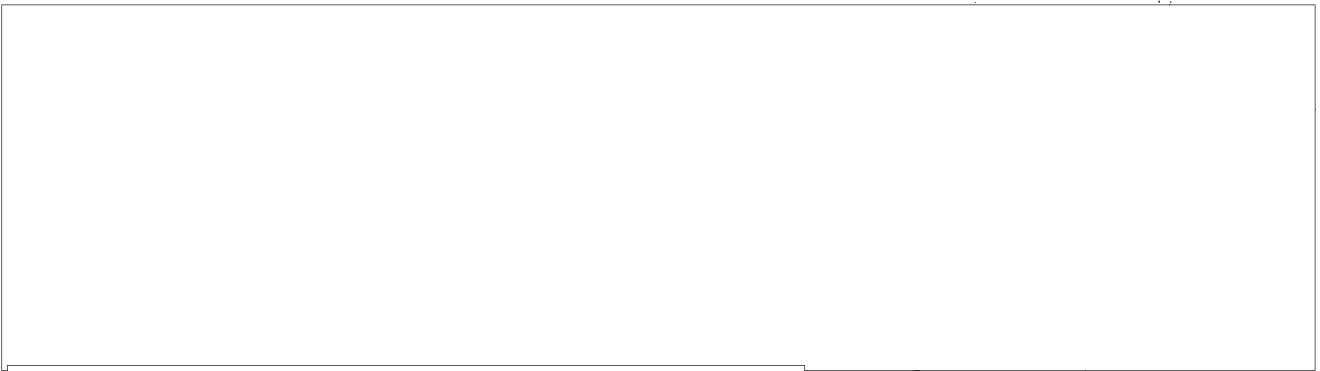
7. Anti-US feeling in the Netherlands is growing:

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The US Ambassador to The Hague states

a growing feeling of resentment toward the US on the part of the Dutch, who allege that US political and economic policy is becoming "increasingly dictatorial and arbitrary as respects Europe."

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The Dutch, faced with a worsening economic situation, have given a bad press to the Kem Amendment and the recently announced ECA Productivity Program.

The Netherlands undoubtedly fears that the loss of its voice in world affairs would force the country to abide by the decisions of the big powers.

There is also ever-present Dutch resentment against the US because of its role in achieving Indonesian independence.

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This is currently accentuated by the Indonesian demands for revision of the Dutch-Indonesian agreements and the transfer of Netherlands New Guinea to Indonesia. Continuation of the current anti-US attitude would jeopardize implementation of the Dutch defense program.

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8. Further Niemoeller opposition to rearmament expected:

A resolution opposing a West German contribution to European defense is likely to be presented at the meeting in early September of the Council of the German Evangelical (Protestant) Church, according to its head Dr. Otto Dibelius.

In an interview with High Commissioner McCloy, Dibelius stated that the anti-rearment forces under Dr. Martin Niemoeller would offer such a resolution, which would be defeated, and that they would then make an appeal to the public to resist any legislation on a defense contribution. Dibelius pointed out that many of the Protestant youth now support the Niemoeller position.

Comment: Pastor Niemoeller, now the head of the Evangelical Church of Hesse, has made periodic pronouncements on world affairs. He leads a wing of the Protestant Church which combines attacks on various Allied policies with a neutralist line.

Despite a demand last April by Church leaders that he stay out of politics, he has lately continued his old habits. There is no real indication of how much support his minority receives within the Church.

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