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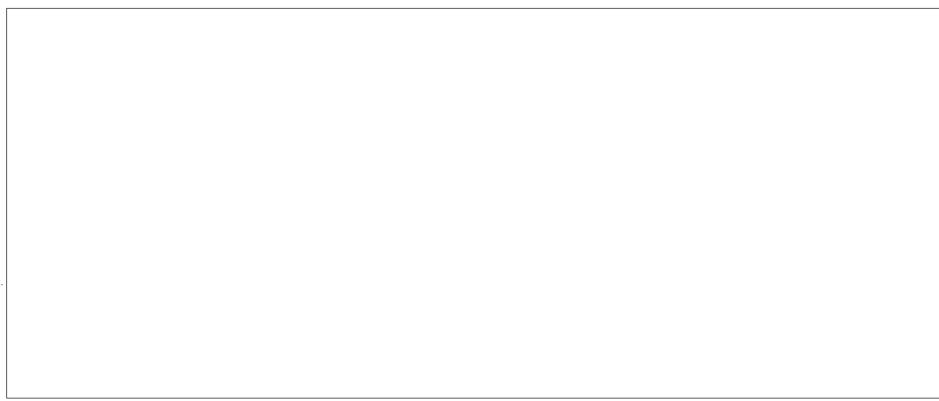
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1. SOVIET PRELATE REPORTEDLY DENIES GERM WARFARE
WAS USED IN KOREA

[Redacted]

Metropolitan Nikolai of the Russian (USSR) Orthodox Church, when questioned about bacteriological warfare in Korea on 6 April said, "I do not believe such warfare took place in Korea," according to the Swedish newspaper Expressen.

In the past, Nikolai, as a member of the World Peace Council, which led international exploitation of the germ warfare charge, has faithfully parroted Moscow's charge that the United States used bacteriological warfare. In a recent interview with the Norwegian paper Arbeiderbladet, Nikolai was still quoted as saying that he believed such warfare had in fact taken place.

[Redacted]

According to Expressen, the metropolitan followed his disclaimer of belief in germ warfare with a comment that "I believe the United States and the Soviet Union will both be able to live and prosper without war." While this suggests that his interview might be a calculated move in the Soviet "new look" of coexistence, an attempt by Reuters to obtain confirmation from the metropolitan of the Expressen interview brought the response that "our church does not deal with political problems."

The charge that the United States used germ warfare originated with the North Koreans on 22 February 1952 and immediately developed into a major campaign on the initiative of Peiping. If Nikolai actually made the remarks attributed to him in Stockholm, and did so with Moscow's consent, this represents a unique departure from the support Moscow has

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consistently given Communist China on international issues. It appears unlikely that Moscow is prepared to embarrass Peiping by officially reversing its position on this issue to which both have been so deeply committed.

The Chinese Communists are unlikely to admit that their charges were spurious. Peiping is expected to remain silent on the subject unless challenged, in which case the Chinese would probably reaffirm their original position. [redacted]

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2. CEYLON ELECTIONS RUNNING STRONGLY ANTIGOVERNMENT



Sweeping opposition victories on the first of three days of balloting in Ceylon's national elections for 95 seats in the lower house of parliament suggest that a united front dominated by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's independent Sri Lanka Freedom Party will be in a position to demand that it be allowed to form a government when the elections are over.

The united front has won 28 out of 42 seats contested on 5 April. The United National Party, which heretofore has controlled the government by a comfortable majority, won only eight seats. The Trotskyite Nava Lanka Sama Samaja party won four seats, the Communist Party one seat, and an independent one seat. The remaining seats will be contested in elections on 7 and 10 April.

The front is pledged to avoid involvement in power blocs; to abolish British bases in Ceylon and to oust all foreign troops; to nationalize all key industries as well as foreign-owned plantations and transport, banking, and insurance interests, and to put the trade of Ceylon into Ceylonese hands.

The American embassy in Colombo reports that Governor General Goonetilleke will ask Prime Minister Kotellawala to form a government even if his United National Party has a minority in parliament. There are also rumors that if this government fails to win its first test of strength, the governor general will dissolve parliament and call for new elections, which only the UNP is financially equipped to face. Such action by the governor general, which would resemble earlier actions taken by the governments of

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both Pakistan and India, probably would only temporarily stabilize the situation. It would not end what is apparently a growing feeling on the part of the Ceylonese people that it is "time for a change."

Constituencies voting on 5 April were chosen by the government because of their supposed loyalty, and they were intended to start a favorable UNP trend which would be reflected in subsequent voting on 7 and 10 April. It was generally recognized that many constituencies voting on the third day would be antigovernment, and it was hoped that early results favorable to the government would influence voters in these constituencies to alter their vote.

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3. WELCOME FOR SYRIAN PARTY LEADER SYMBOLIZES COMMUNIST GAINS

[Redacted] Over 25,000 people went to Damascus from all over Syria and Lebanon to welcome Khalid Bakhdash, leader of the Syrian-Lebanese Communist Party, on his return from the 20th Party Congress in Moscow, according to Syrian chief of staff Shuqayr. Shuqayr said the turnout was the largest in Syria in 20 years and indicated a leftward turn of Syrian public opinion much greater than Syrian officials had estimated. [Redacted]

Comment

There has been no effective barrier to the increase of Communist prestige and influence in Syria since the overthrow of the Shishakli dictatorship two years ago. Communist influence now extends into all spheres of Syrian public life--bureaucracy, army, labor, press and education. Local Communists have acquired additional respectability from the Soviet bloc-Egyptian arms deal and from Soviet statements interpreted as supporting the Arab cause against Israel.

One Syrian conservative leader has stated that if parliamentary elections were to be held in the near future, they would produce a solid bloc of 50 deputies, out of 142, serving Communist aims and would render the situation "irretrievable."

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**4. REGULAR AIR FLIGHTS REPORTED BETWEEN TAIPEI
AND CHINESE IRREGULARS IN BURMA**

A leader of the Chinese Nationalist ir-
regulars in Burma recently told [redacted]

[redacted] mai that there are regular monthly flights
between Taipei and a guerrilla airstrip located in Burma
near the borders with Laos and Thailand.

Comment

Taipei has continually denied having con-
tact with the irregulars, but there is good
evidence of close liaison between the irregulars and Chinese
embassy officials in Bangkok. [redacted]

The Burmese government tends to hold
the United States responsible for Taipei's activities. It has
so far given no indication of being aware of the reported
flights. [redacted]

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION (Information as of 1700, 6 April)

A resumption of artillery fire between Israeli and Egyptian forces near the Gaza strip occurred on the morning of 6 April following yesterday's battle. A second cease-fire has been agreed to, and the border is reported quiet. (Press)

A Syrian patrol was ambushed in Syrian territory just east of Lake Tiberias on the night of 4 April, ac-

[redacted] Two Syrians were wounded, one probably fatally. [redacted] believes the ambush may have been an attempt by Israel to provoke retaliations in advance of the arrival of the United Nations secretary general.

Fifteen young South Africans arrived in Israel on 4 April from Johannesburg to serve one year in "national service," according to an Israeli broadcast from Jerusalem. A second contingent was scheduled to arrive at the end of the week, and additional South African volunteers were reportedly being organized. This is the first report of arrivals in Israel's campaign for foreign volunteers to help defend its border settlements. (FBIS)

The Soviet freighter Smela arrived at Alexandria with large crates on deck on 3 April and berthed in the port's security area. When it passed Istanbul coming out of the Black Sea, the Smela made the usual false declaration of Soviet ships carrying military equipment to Egypt--machinery for Albania. Its arrival at Alexandria brings to 18 the number of arms cargoes transported by Soviet freighters to Egypt since deliveries began last October.

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