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1 April 1951

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GENERAL

1. Widespread UK and French sentiment for more conciliatory Western position in four-power talks:

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US Embassy London reports that the British public, which has viewed the Soviet proposals of 28 March as "a concession of considerable importance," would become increasingly critical of US policy should these proposals not be accepted as a basis for discussion in seeking to eliminate unacceptable features of the revised Soviet agenda. The Paris

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press has featured the alleged British feeling that the "ice is beginning to melt" between the West and the USSR, and has emphasized that the UK Government is trying to bring the US to a "more moderate policy" in the Far East while appearing to count on France to use similar influence in Europe. The pro-government newspaper Figaro reported in particular that "wide current British opinion" had observed that the West "would be well advised" to renounce German rearmament, at least for the near future.

Comment: The Soviet proposals of 30 March -- introducing additional East-West issues -- are likely to produce considerable public disillusionment in the UK and France, but will not halt the rise in popular sentiment for a more conciliatory Western position resulting from Gromyko's 28 March concessions.

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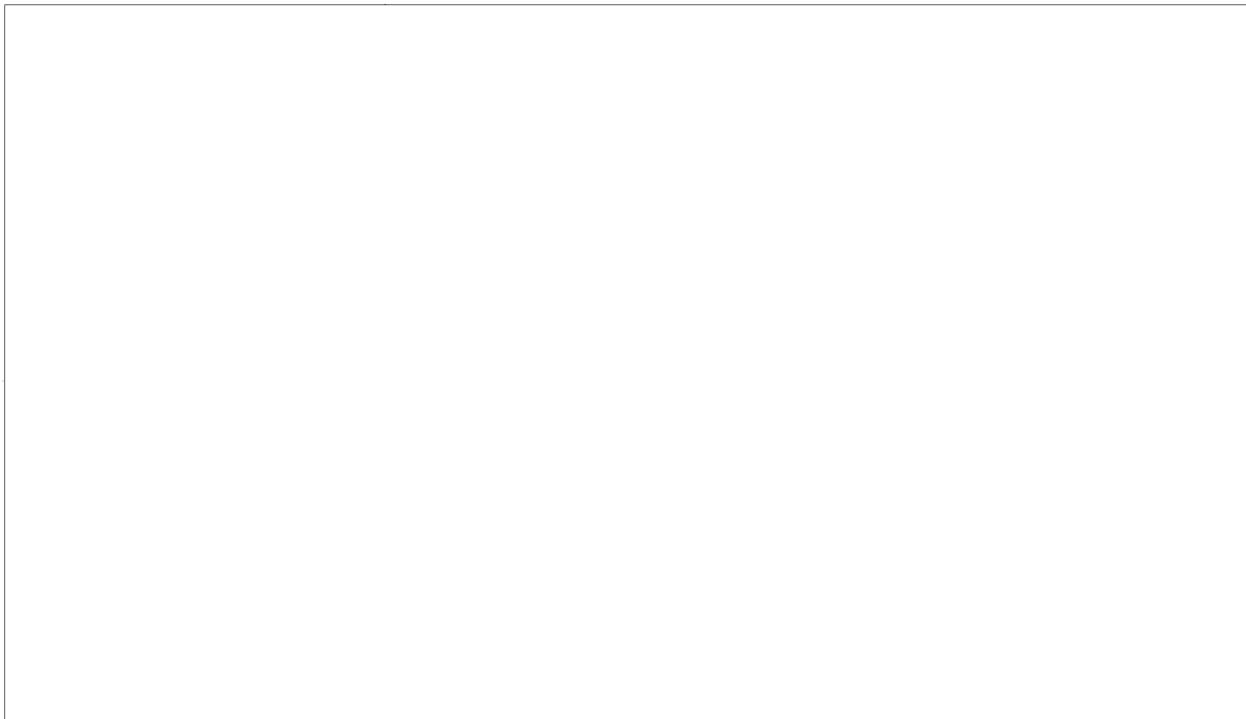
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FAR EAST

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3. Urgent air preparations being undertaken by enemy forces in Korea:



Comment: According to previous indications, for the past several months North Korean and Chinese Communist air units in Manchuria have been intensifying their training activity, and have been nearing the conclusion of preparations for combat. This recent information further confirms the impression that an imminent, significant increase in combat air activity over Korea is planned by the enemy.

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EASTERN EUROPE

4. French Legation reports governmental crisis in Albania:

US Emb Belgrade
 30 Mar 51
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The French Legation in Tirana reports that disagreement among high-level government officials has broken out over implementation of the harsh law against terrorist activities decreed on 26 February as a result of the bombing of the Soviet Legation on 19 February. The Minister of Justice, Dr. Manol Konomi, has reportedly resigned in protest against the decree, which deprives the accused of all legal rights and includes arbitrary arrest, trials in camera without defense counsel, conviction without appeal, and execution immediately after sentence. According to the French Legation, Konomi, Vice Premier Tuk Jakova, and Major General Spiro Moisiu, commander of the Tirana Garrison -- with the support of Premier Enver Hoxha -- are sympathetic with popular feelings against the decree. The Minister of Interior, Major General Mehmet Shehu, who is generally regarded as the eventual successor to Hoxha, leads the opposing pro-Soviet faction. The Legation reports that the divergence of views between the two groups explains the tension prevailing in the ministerial residential quarter, which is under military guard not only for security purposes but also because several dissident ministers are reported to be confined to their homes. The Legation concludes that because of the profound domestic disturbance, the Soviet grip on Albania has been accelerated and strengthened.

Comment: Other reports bear out the French Legation's conclusion that Soviet influence and direction in Albania have greatly increased during the past six months. Premier Hoxha has been reported to be merely a figurehead in Albania. Shehu, on the other hand, has the reputation of being the leading agent of Soviet policy in the country.

5. Soviet consulates in Yugoslavia closed:

US Embassy Belgrade reports that the Yugoslav Government has requested the USSR to close its consulates in Zagreb and Split and to remove their eight staff

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members from Yugoslav territory immediately. The request was based principally on the grounds of lack of reciprocity, since the USSR

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does not permit Yugoslav consulates outside of Moscow. The Yugoslav Government also noted that the Soviet consulates in Zagreb and Split had no proper consular functions to justify their existence. According to the US Embassy report, the Soviet Government has already complied by closing the consulates and the Soviet personnel are preparing to leave the country.

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