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SECURITY INFORMATION

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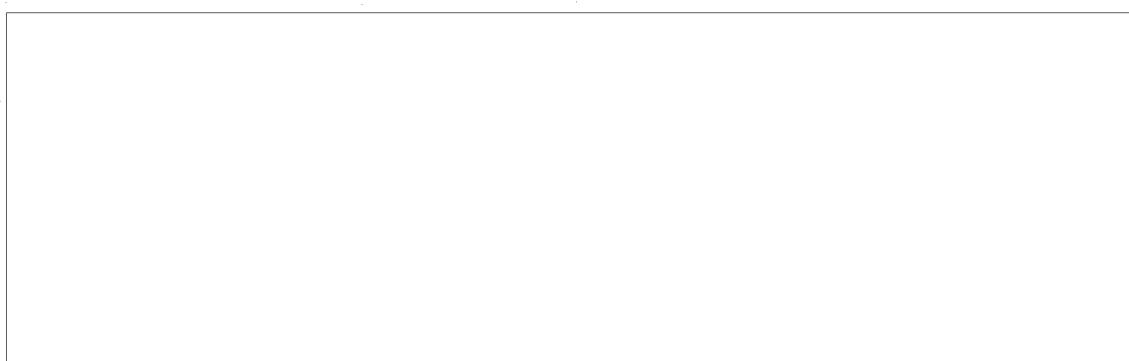
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~~TOP SECRET~~**GENERAL****1. Soviet Orbit charters of foreign vessels increasing:**

Soviet Orbit countries chartered at least 421 merchant ships, including 32 tankers, totalling approximately 1,525,089 gross tons from non-Communist countries during the fourth quarter of 1951.

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In the first ten months of 1951 the Soviet Orbit chartered 583 non-Communist ships, including 44 tankers, aggregating approximately 3,438,254 gross tons. Most of the ships involved were of British, Norwegian, Panamanian, or Greek registry.

Comment: The Soviet Orbit drive to expand trade with non-Communist countries is limited by dependence on foreign merchant vessels, particularly tankers, since ships of foreign flag carry the greater part of Soviet Orbit ocean traffic. Some of these ships were used in the China trade.

The total shipping chartered in the first ten months of 1951 exceeded by over a million tons the combined Soviet and Satellite merchant fleet in January 1951, which was estimated at 2,225,000 gross tons. Tankers chartered during the fourth quarter amounted to 112,000 gross tons, or nearly seventy percent of the total capacity owned by the Orbit.

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FAR EAST**3. Chinese again report civilian suffering in North Korea:**

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Comment: Civilian food shortages, already critical, are probably being accentuated by the traditional "spring hunger" --the period between consumption of the fall rice harvest and the maturing of the summer grains in June.

All indications, however, point to a continued adequate level of supply for both Chinese Communist and North Korean military units.

4. Chinese guard against plague threat from Korea:

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The Chinese Communists are restricting the return from Korea of personnel without an inoculation record and a "no-plague" certificate.

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Comment: [redacted]

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[redacted] Communist precautions are understandable in view of the fact that plague is endemic to the area. They also serve to emphasize the biological warfare charges.

5. France intimates willingness to repatriate Chinese Nationalists in Indochina:

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[redacted] According to the Chinese Nationalist Foreign Minister, France has intimated that as a quid pro quo for Security Council support on the Tunisian question it would send to Formosa the Chinese Nationalist troops interned in Indochina.

Comment: France has persistently refused to repatriate interned Chinese Nationalist forces to Formosa for fear of provoking the Chinese Communists to increased support of the Viet Minh. The maintenance of these troops has been a substantial drain on French resources in Indochina, and they represent a considerable security problem. France recently indicated a willingness to discuss their eventual repatriation.

6. Indonesian Government uncovers plot to capture West Java capital:

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[redacted] the Indonesian army and police uncovered and thwarted a plot of the insurgent Darul Islam to seize Bandung, the capital of West Java, on the night of 3-4 April. Captured documents indicated the penetration of local army and air force leadership by these fanatical Moslem rebels and the smuggling of large quantities of arms and ammunition from government armories over a period of several months.

The United States Army Attache comments that although isolated events during the past four months had pointed toward Darul Islam penetration of the military forces, this report constitutes the first positive evidence of such a development.

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Comment: The Darul Islam is the largest, best-organized insurgent group in Indonesia. It has long been attempting to establish, by force of arms, a theocratic state in West Java, and more recently has sought to extend its influence throughout the entire island.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

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WESTERN EUROPE

8. Severe crisis afflicts Trieste pro-Cominform party:

A crisis has reportedly developed in the ranks of the pro-Cominform party in Trieste as a result of the mildly pro-Italian stand taken by party leaders during the recent demonstrations.

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Party chief Vittorio Vidali's "irredentist" speeches in southern Italy have added to the dissatisfaction, and efforts by party leaders to dissipate it have been unsuccessful.

Comment: The Trieste pro-Cominform party, as opposed to its Italian counterpart, has been supporting the plan for an independent Trieste under four-power control. There are indications, however, that Vidali is preparing the ground for a shift to a policy compatible with that of his "Italian brothers."

Although the small Slovene minority in the party may be vulnerable to a Yugoslav attempt to exploit Vidali's alleged abandonment of the independent cause, the preponderant Italian majority and the old-line Communists will probably give full support to Vidali's leadership.

9. Possible end of West Berlin coalition government seen:

Prospects for the successful continuation of the present anti-Communist coalition government in West Berlin are diminishing,

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One leading Christian Democrat stated that, rather than agree to the Socialist demand for new elections, his party and the Free Democrats would form a new government without the Socialists but with a slim majority of five votes in the local assembly.

Comment: Considerable bickering has threatened the existence of the Berlin city government since late January 1952, but an outright split has so far been avoided. Although any new government formed would be a pro-Allied grouping, the elimination of the Socialists, including Mayor Reuter, would bring to an end the long-standing cooperation between major Berlin parties which in the past has greatly aided the Allies in their occupation.

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