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State Department review
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LATIN AMERICA

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FAR EAST

2. More Chinese Communist troops may be destined for Korea:

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About 6,000 Chinese Communist troops,
formerly stationed in Hupeh and Kiangsi
Provinces, arrived in Hankow on 31
October, [redacted]

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[redacted] The troops were said to be awaiting rail transportation
for their departure to Northeast China.

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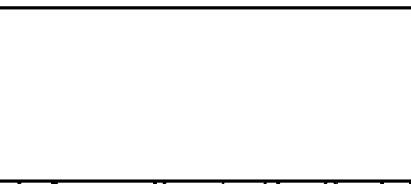
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WESTERN EUROPE

5. Allied air access to Vienna again challenged by Russians:

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At a 28 November meeting of the Allied Council in Austria, the Soviet member presented a resolution to prohibit American and British combat aircraft from using the air corridors to Vienna.

According to the Soviet interpretation, a 1945 Allied protocol precludes the flight to Vienna of other than "communications or transport" planes.

In view of Soviet High Commissioner Sviridov's insistence on reciprocal overflight privileges in the Western zones, Ambassador Thompson believes that the Russians may intend to test this prerogative.

Comment: American use of the Tulln airport and the corridor to it for commercial and military planes has been the subject of frequent exchanges between the Soviet and American High Commissioners. The Russian protests, however, have not gone beyond disagreement with the American view that existing agreements place no restrictions on the types of planes which may service occupation forces in Austria.

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6. East German ordinance hurts West Berlin:

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[REDACTED]

American observers in Berlin believe that the East German ordinance restricting West Berlin purchases in East Berlin will bring about a further deterioration in the living conditions of West Berlin low-income groups. The People's Police have reportedly increased surveillance of West Berliners at sector borders. No major disruption of the West Berlin economy is foreseen.

Comment: Although East German propaganda has strongly emphasized that the new measure is directed against the policies of the West Berlin government, the ordinance also bears out reports of serious food shortages in East Germany.

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8. Left-center of Italian Christian Democrats shows great strength at party congress:

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[REDACTED]

At the recent Christian Democratic national congress, the left-center faction, which has supported an electoral coalition of the moderate parties, emerged as the strongest force. The American Embassy estimates that it has picked up about half the seats in the party's national council, and is therefore in a position to challenge the predominantly right-center leadership, although it is unlikely to do so before the elections.

Premier de Gasperi, the Embassy notes, remains the "unquestioned" leader of his party.

Comment: Should the left-center succeed in halting or slowing the party's trend toward collaboration with the Monarchists and other right-wing parties, the government coalition's prospects for victory in the spring elections would be substantially improved.

LATIN AMERICA

9. Venezuela opposition party reportedly victorious in election:

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[REDACTED]
The government party has lost the Constituent Assembly election in Venezuela. [REDACTED]

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Unofficial reports indicate a victory of "possible landslide proportions" for the Republican Democratic Union (URD), whose leader, Villalba, has publicly claimed victory. Venezuelan morning newspapers of 1 December, however, carried no elections results.

Comment: Unofficial returns are too fragmentary to substantiate opposition claims of a landslide.

The URD, the third-ranking party, is a moderate left-wing party headed by the demagogic Jovito Villalba. Villalba recently retracted his campaign allusions to nationalization of the oil and steel industries and has professed friendship for the United States.

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A government overturn at the polls would be unprecedented and might lead to a fabricated revolt and "palace coup" or other drastic action.

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