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SOUTH ASIA

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WESTERN EUROPE

2. West Germans propose European scientific research body:

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[Redacted]

The West German delegation at the Paris European Defense Community discussions has proposed that scientific research in selected fields be pooled by member nations. These fields cover nuclear physics, chemical and biological warfare, telecommunications, submarine development, guided missiles, and military aircraft. The plan would provide a commission to regulate such research.

Comment: This proposal may be a German attempt to obviate the need for a contractual convention prohibiting German research in these fields. It is probably intended to permit German scientists to undertake such research in Germany without incurring Allied objections.

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3. Reduced French military program envisaged:

[redacted] France will soon have to announce large reductions in its military commitments and may even have to reduce forces already mobilized, according to an analysis by the US Embassy in Paris. Responsible French officials realize that American assistance cannot provide the solution to their budgetary problems, and French military authorities are now attempting to curtail their program to fit actual financial limitations.

Comment: The French Finance and Defense Ministries have been at odds recently on the scope of military expenditures for 1952. Premier Pleven has just imposed a makeshift compromise for January and February, but a realistic appraisal of the situation may force a reduction in the over-all military program with serious implications for NATO.

4. Crisis approaching in French policy on Indochina:

3.3(h)(2)

[redacted] French policy in regard to the war in Indochina is rapidly moving toward a crisis, in the opinion of the US Embassy in Paris. While the Embassy does not envisage immediate French abandonment of Indochina, it thinks that public sentiment for withdrawal is strong and will gain steadily, and that developments in Europe and Vietnam are forcing the government to consider curtailing French efforts in Southeast Asia.

Comment: The French have become increasingly insistent in recent months on the need for more help in Indochina. The growing financial difficulties in France will probably force the government to reduce some of its commitments. Furthermore, the US and Britain may soon be faced with French inability to commit sufficient manpower to maintain their present position in Indochina.

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