

~~TOP SECRET~~

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3.5(c)

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15 February 1958

Copy No. 137

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



31
NO CHANGES IN CLASS.
11 DECEMBER 1950
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS-S
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2810
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 14-58 REVIEWER: []

~~TOP SECRET~~



TOP SECRET

15 FEBRUARY 1958

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

East Germany - Struggle between Ulbricht and his party opponents continues.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Tunisia - Tension continues; French take strong line on provisioning of garrisons.

②

"Arab Palestine" government may be created in Gaza strip to join Egyptian-Syrian union.

③

Indonesia - Dissidents persist in efforts to force change in government.

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Syria fearful of Western-supported attack by Arab neighbors.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

15 February 1958

DAILY BRIEF**I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC**SIRAB

East German party rivalry: The struggle between Ulbricht and his opponents in the East German party is continuing. Many party functionaries are shocked and indignant at last week's purge and expect that as a result of Ulbricht's harder course, open opposition to him will increase. Convinced that his dismissal was due to Ulbricht's misrepresentations to the Russians, deposed Party Secretary Schirdewan is hoping to appeal to Moscow.

(Page 1)

OK

II. ASIA-AFRICA

NO

The Tunisian situation: Tension inside Tunisia continues. The French are determined to resupply their garrisons, an action which may provoke clashes with Tunisian security forces. Low-level observation flights by the French Air Force are in contravention of the Tunisian Government's order of 8 February, and Tunisian forces have fired at these flights at least once. French military opinion in Paris appears deeply aroused, and there is wide political support for the government's firm attitude.

(Page 2)

OK

Palestinian refugees: An "Arab Palestine" government may be revived soon in the Egyptian-occupied Gaza strip so that the Palestinian refugees there can go through the motions of adhering to the Egyptian-Syrian union. This move, which is reported to be scheduled for mid-March, might make further difficulty for Jordan, since it would probably have some impact on the Palestine Arab refugees there. The notorious ex-Grand Mufti of Jerusalem is probably connected with the move. [redacted] (Page 3)
(Map)

No

Indonesia: The Indonesian dissidents are persisting in their efforts to force a change in the Djakarta government and are threatening to proceed with the establishment of a rival regime after their ultimatum expires on 15 February. The government's latest retaliatory moves have been the cutting of communications and financial support to Central Sumatra. Prime Minister Djuanda, however, may attempt to avoid a showdown by submitting his resignation to President Sukarno when he returns to Djakarta on 16 February. Djuanda would recommend that Hatta be his successor. [redacted] (Page 4)

No

*Syrian military [redacted]

No

A partial call-up of reserve personnel was observed in Damascus on 14 February, and additional troops were deployed in the vicinity of the city, suggesting that development of opposition in Syria, possibly within the army itself, may be the actual cause of apprehension. [redacted]
(Page 5)

III. THE WEST

No

*French plan to hold Bizerte: The French Government may be seriously considering a plan calling for the "immediate" withdrawal of its troops from all Tunisian bases except Bizerte, which would then be given a status "like Gibraltar for the British." Evidently in anticipation of objections from Bourguiba, who would thus obtain no more than he had hoped to get through negotiation before the Sakiet bombing, the plan includes a request for the United States to pave the way.

Tension over Cyprus issue: Greek-Turkish tension over Cyprus, both on the island and the mainland, has reached such intensity that any miscalculation by Greek, Turkish, or British authorities could spark widespread disorders. If EOKA turns its attack against Turkish Cypriot villages-- as its leader apparently intends in the event of further Turkish Cypriot attacks on Greeks-- disorders would spread rapidly and probably include violent reactions in both Greece and Turkey. Two Turkish generals warn of possible armed volunteers from the mainland.

(Page 6)

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

East German Factional Struggle Intensifies

The bitter struggle between Ulbricht and his reformist opponents continues, and opposition to the East German party boss is apparently becoming more intense, but Ulbricht apparently still enjoys the Kremlin's support.

Many high- and medium-level Communist functionaries have been shocked by last week's purge and feel that Ulbricht has gained little more than a pyrrhic victory since his harder course will lead increasing numbers of party officials into opposition. Deposed Party Secretary Schirdewan, [redacted] hopes to be able to appeal his case to Moscow, in the conviction that Ulbricht misrepresented the nature of the opposition in East Germany in order to win Kremlin approval for the purge.

Meanwhile, Ulbricht may be moving against other opponents, such as Premier Grotewohl, whose departure on 12 February for a "rest cure of several weeks" appears significant after the outspoken attacks he is said to have made on the first secretary during the past few weeks. Defense Minister Stoph who, [redacted] was sharply criticized at last week's party plenum for his inadequate leadership of the armed forces, may also be purged. Though an Ulbricht protégé, Stoph is now believed to have turned against the first secretary and thrown his support to Schirdewan. [redacted]

[redacted]

-**SECRET**-

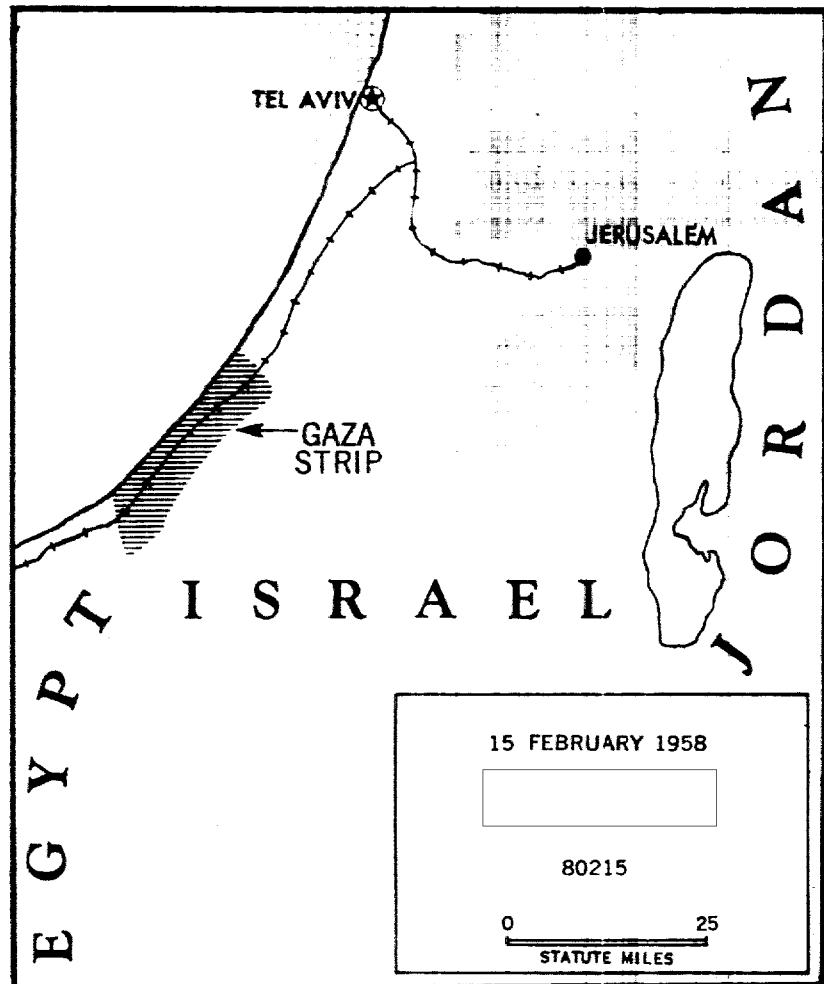
II. ASIA-AFRICA

The Tunisian Situation

Although there have been no disorders, tension inside Tunisia continues and new incidents which might get out of control seem likely. The French have already violated the Tunisian "blockade" in isolated instances of helicopter and parachute contacts, and now seem determined to undertake a general resupply of their garrisons before withdrawal talks begin. The Bourguiba government is disturbed over French low-level observation flights, which defy a Tunisian order of 8 February forbidding all military flights. An American official said French military flights he saw in the Bizerte and Tunis area on 13 February "appeared deliberately provocative." Tunisian security forces fired at these flights in at least one instance, without damage to the aircraft.

The strongly nationalistic tone of the French Government's public position on the Tunisian issue, abetted by Premier Bourguiba's demands and the "blockade" of French troops in Tunisia, is rallying broad political support in France. The press and political leaders are particularly incensed over the demand for withdrawal from Bizerte.

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Gaza Palestinians May Join Egyptian-Syrian Union

The more than one-quarter million inhabitants of the Gaza strip, including about 200,000 Palestinian refugees, may be formally united with the new Egyptian-Syrian United Arab Republic, [redacted]

[redacted] A plan appears to be under way to create a Palestinian legislative assembly in Gaza in mid-March, to be followed immediately by a request for union with the UAR. The move would support Nasir's campaign against King Husayn by its strong propaganda appeal to the more than 400,000 refugees now in western Jordan who are overwhelmingly opposed to the King. Creation of a Palestinian Arab state would also confirm Israeli apprehensions that the UAR is directed against Israel.

The Gaza sector is now governed by executive and legislative councils under the supervision of an Egyptian-appointed governor general. The self-appointed champion of the Palestinians has been the ex-Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who has bitterly opposed the Hashemite kings of Jordan and Iraq and may hope to fulfill his ambition to become head of a Palestinian Arab state. He has also been named repeatedly as a prominent figure in clandestine plans for the overthrow of the Jordanian Government by pro-Egyptian elements. [redacted]

[redacted]

-**SECRET**-

Indonesian Situation

The dissidents in Central Sumatra are continuing their campaign to unseat the Djakarta government. In the face of Djakarta's rejection of their demand for the resignation of the Djuanda cabinet and the central government's subsequent retaliatory measures, the dissidents are threatening to proceed with the establishment of a rival government after the 15 February deadline of their ultimatum. In addition, the commander of South Sumatra, Lt. Col. Barlian, who has opposed the formation of a rival government, is nevertheless said to be determined to resist any central government military move through his territory.

The government's latest countermoves have been to sever communications between Djakarta and Padang, Central Sumatra, and to suspend government financial support to Padang. The financial measure is probably the most effective move available to Djakarta short of the use of force.

Prime Minister Djuanda appears to be continuing efforts toward compromise. He reportedly plans to submit his resignation to President Sukarno when the latter returns to Indonesia on 16 February and to renew his efforts toward the formation of a cabinet led by former Vice President Hatta. Although Hatta has stated that he does not want to participate in the next government, non-Communist leaders in Djkarta believe he might do so if personally asked by Sukarno. Sukarno, however, is presently keeping his own council. [redacted]

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Syria Fearful of Western-Supported Attack By Arab Neighbors

Syrian Army leaders appear to be increasingly apprehensive over internal and external opposition to the union with Egypt.

[redacted] alleged recent troop movements by Turkey and Israel, aerial reconnaissance of the Syrian coast, and the uncovering of an opposition plot in southern Syria, [redacted] fear that "Western" powers were preparing to undertake military operations against Syria. The Syrians believe this operation would include invasion by forces from neighboring Arab countries on the pretext of rescuing the internal groups opposed to the union.

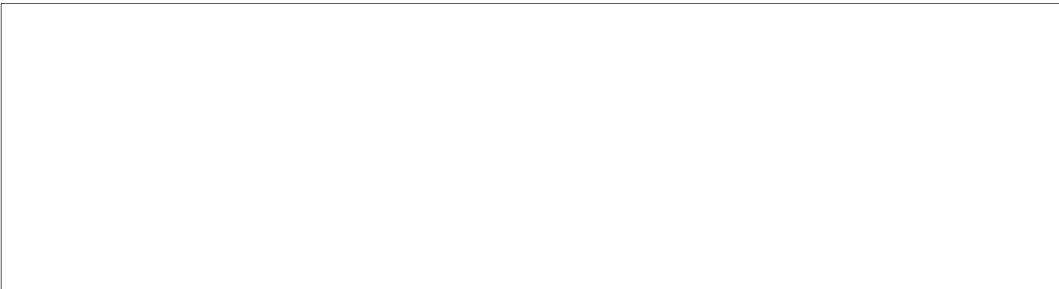
A partial call-up of army reserves and popular resistance forces was observed in Damascus on 14 February. Additional troops and artillery were deployed southwest of Damascus. In the past such maneuvers have occurred when there has been a factional dispute within the army.

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III. THE WEST

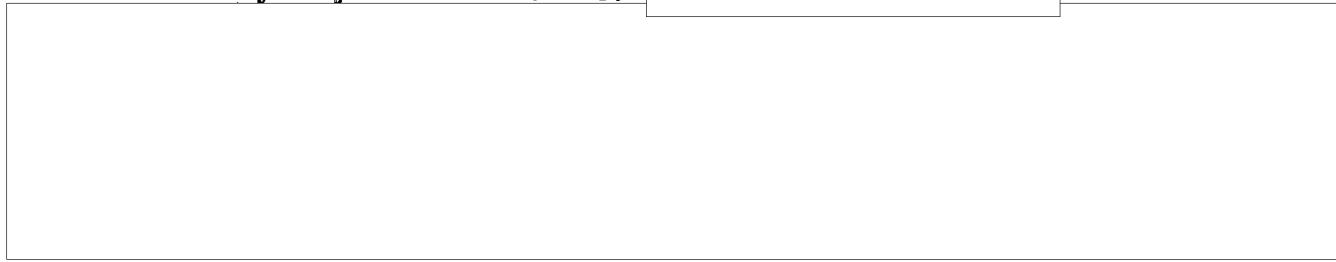
Tension Over Cyprus Nears Breaking Point

Tension over the Cyprus issue is dangerously high and could rapidly give way to widespread violence in Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey. The Greek Cypriot underground organization EOKA claims to be ready for "all-out war." The resumption of violence on Cyprus, however, may be temporarily postponed pending receipt of a report from the acting ethnarch, Bishop Anthimos of Kitium, who was due to return to Cyprus from Athens on 14 February.



If EOKA should aim its attack at the Turkish Cypriots, [and destroy entire villages, as its leader has intimated might happen], Greek-Turkish disorders [would spread] could rapidly to both Greece and Turkey. Special precautions are being taken in both countries to prevent trouble. While isolated attacks probably could not be prevented, any widespread breakdown of public security on the mainland would only result from deliberate negligence if not inspiration. Retaliation would be a certainty.

While the Cyprus government could not depend on the predominantly Turkish Cypriot police during intercommunal violence, British troops on the island--recently augmented to a strength of approximately 24,000--could control any major clashes there.



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