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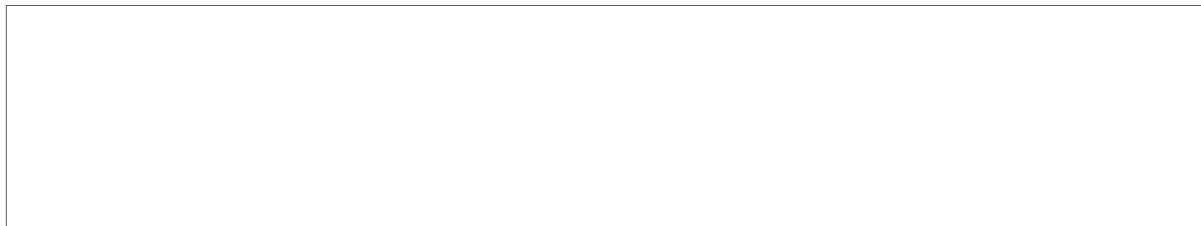
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GENERAL

1. Burmese official reports on trade agreements with the Satellites:



Comment: Burma has also signed a trade agreement with Czechoslovakia, the terms of which are not yet available.

If Moscow agrees to buy 200,000 tons of rice, the Orbit--including Communist China--will be committed to take almost one third of Burma's 1955 export surplus, which should exceed 1,500,000 tons. Since Rangoon's ambitious development plan is largely financed by rice exports, full implementation of these agreements will provide the Orbit with important leverage over Burma's economy, which has heretofore been oriented to the West. (Concurred in by ORR)

SOVIET UNION

2. Soviet flight operations indicative of atomic debris sampling program:

[Redacted]

Analysis of the flight operations of a Soviet air division equipped with TU-4 medium bombers and based at Poltava in the Ukraine reveals that this unit conducted daily roundtrip flights to the Leningrad area during the US nuclear test series in the spring of 1954, and possibly again beginning in late February 1955 during the current series. During the 1954 US tests, this division also sent six TU-4's temporarily to China.

During the Soviet nuclear tests in the fall of 1954, the Poltava division conducted similar flights to the Leningrad area, and deployed aircraft temporarily to southern Turkestan and to the Saratov area, north of the Caspian.

Comment: The coincidence of this unusual pattern of flight operations by Poltava division TU-4's with American and Soviet nuclear weapons tests indicates that the USSR initiated an atomic debris sampling program during the spring of 1954.

[Redacted]

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. Egypt failing to counter Turkish-Iraqi pact:

[Redacted]

Egypt's attempt to get quick agreement to a new Arab defense arrangement, aimed at countering the Turkish-Iraqi pact, appears to have failed.

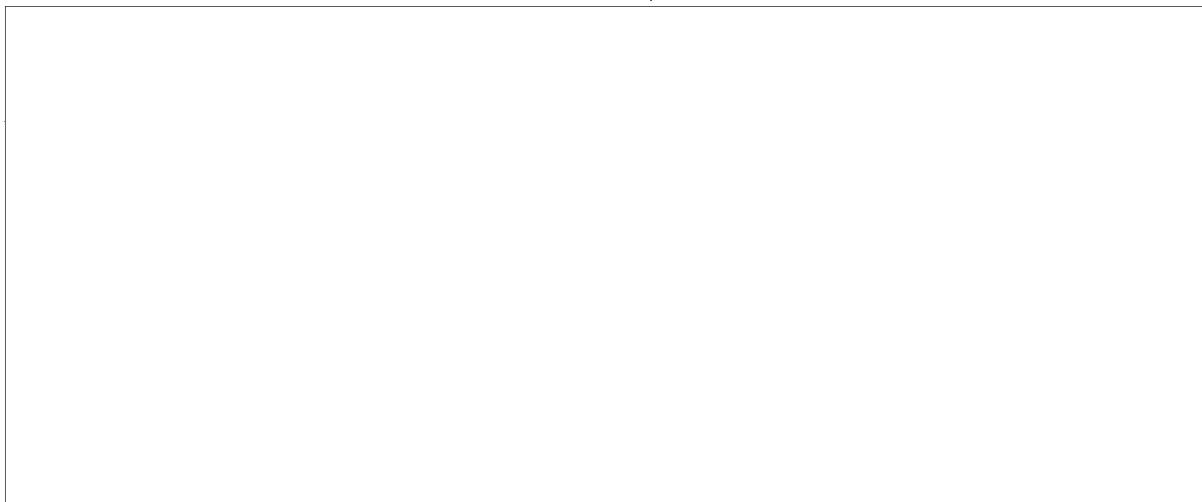
[Redacted] none of these countries is now prepared to enter such an arrangement, although the neutralist Syrian cabinet apparently has agreed in principle with the Egyptian proposals.

Egyptian minister of national guidance Salah Salim, accompanied by Syrian foreign minister Azm, left Jordan on 4 March for Saudi Arabia instead of for Lebanon as originally planned. They are to consult with the Saudi Arabian government, which is almost certainly supporting Egypt's overtures to the other Arabs.

While Egyptian and Saudi maneuvering toward a new agreement will probably continue for some time, nothing stronger than the present ineffectual Arab League Collective Security Pact is likely to result.

EASTERN EUROPE

4. IL-28 jet light bombers possibly delivered to Czechoslovakia:



Comment: This is the first indication of delivery flights of IL-28's to Czechoslovakia. Poland, the only Satellite equipped with IL-28's, has received approximately 70 since early 1953. There are no bomber units in the Czechoslovak air force. The air forces of Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria have bomber units equipped with TU-2 piston light bombers.

The airfield at Prerov is the site of final pre-operational training of Czech jet fighter pilots. It is quite possible that transition training in the jet light bomber will take place here. Malacky has been reported as a bombing and gunnery training base, but no air force unit is known to be assigned there.

WESTERN EUROPE

5. Churchill's new defense policy wins strong support in Britain:

The Conservative government's strong presentation of Britain's new defense policy in "Churchill's best prose" has been persuasive in parliament. The American embassy in London believes that the concept that British possession of nuclear weapons will act as a deterrent to general war will probably be supported by the majority of the British public.

In the parliamentary debate on defense on 1 and 2 March, Labor Party criticism focused on failures in the government's performance thus far on such details as aircraft production. Attlee's closing speech, however, placed him close to the government's basic position. There was little opposition, except from pacifists, to the government's decision to make the H-bomb.

Most of the 56 Laborites who joined Bevan in abstaining on the opposition's censure motion did so in order to express their disapproval of the suggestion that nuclear weapons might be used to repel a "conventional" attack. The American embassy regards this as marking the renewal of a serious challenge to the official Labor Party leadership.

Comment: The responsible British press generally regards Churchill's 1 March speech as "an urgent call to diplomatic action" while the West still enjoys nuclear superiority. Many commentators now see diplomacy as the only alternative to what Churchill describes as "the peace of mutual terror."