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GENERAL

1. Moscow reportedly hints trouble if Iranian fisheries concession ends:

In a recent note to Iran, the USSR requested an extension of the Soviet-Iranian fisheries agreement at least until 31 March, according to the Iranian Minister of Agriculture.

3.3(h)(2)

Three Iranian cabinet members have informed American officials that the note implied that failure to renew the concession would result in trouble in provinces along the Caspian, although this has been denied by two members of parliament.

The Iranian Foreign Minister stated to American Ambassador Henderson that negotiations would begin with the USSR on 1 February for disposition of the joint fisheries property and that the Iranian Government eventually intends to replace Soviet experts.

Comment: The Iranian Government has publicly announced expiration of the fisheries agreement. Other reports have indicated that Moscow was seeking an extension.

Tudeh elements in these Caspian provinces where the fisheries are located are capable of causing considerable unrest in this sensitive area, and the USSR may use them in an attempt to extract concessions from Iran.

FAR EAST

2. Chiang Kai-shek gratified by change in 7th Fleet mission:

Chiang Kai-shek has expressed to American Minister Rankin his gratification over the change in the mission of the American 7th

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Fleet. The Generalissimo said that he hoped for closer organizational cooperation with the United States but would not interpret President Eisenhower's proposed statement as inviting a request for increased aid.

Rankin reports that by organizational cooperation Chiang was referring to the possible establishment of a "combined military staff."

Comment: Nationalist forces are currently capable only of minor raids and limited air attacks against the Chinese mainland and offshore islands. Recent Nationalist planning has envisaged a major operation against the mainland.

3.3(h)(2)

SOUTHEAST ASIA

3. Neutralist attitudes of newly elected group in Hanoi described:

[redacted]

Describing the heterogeneous political group which won the recent Hanoi elections, the American Consul there said it tends toward a neutralism between the opposing forces in Indochina and is profoundly nationalistic. He added that it is a force which is opposed to the Tam government and which will surely have great influence on the preparations to elect a National Assembly.

3.3(h)(2)

The Consul also stated that there is excellent reason to believe that an important factor in the success of the candidate who won the most votes, a former Communist and associate of Ho Chi Minh, was the fact that he has never taken a firm stand against the Viet Minh.

Comment: Premier Tam has promised National Assembly elections within four months, providing Bao Dai approves.

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4. Indonesia orders bunkering of Polish vessel:

[Redacted] Ambassador Cochran in Djakarta reports that the Indonesian Minister of Economy has ordered the Shell Company to provide the Polish vessel Pulaski with sufficient fuel to reach Hong Kong. The company has agreed to comply.

Comment: The British Government had ordered the Shell Company to refuse the ship's request for fuel because of a belief that it was carrying strategic goods.

This action by the Indonesian Government is a further demonstration of its increasing reluctance to cooperate with Western-sponsored measures against the Soviet Orbit.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

5. Important Iranian tribal leader reported under arrest:

[Redacted] The arrest of Bakhtiari tribal leader Bahman Samsam Khan on 29 January has been reported to the American Embassy in Tehran. 3.3(h)(2)

Comment: [Redacted]

[Redacted] the government appears alert to an alleged tribal plot against Mossadeq. 3.3(h)(2)

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6. Sudanese Government increasingly worried about maintenance of law and order:

The Governor General of the Sudan is becoming increasingly worried about the maintenance of law and order, according to the British Foreign Office. He is now discussing with Sudanese leaders the Egyptian position on the new constitution.

3.3(h)(2)

The Foreign Office considers Cairo's attitude on the special powers of the Governor General toward the southern Sudan and the time limit for the transfer of administrative jobs to Sudanese to be the two major stumbling blocks to agreement. It also points out that some of the more than 40 changes, which the Egyptians have proposed in the British draft constitution, may hinder progress toward an agreement.

Comment: There is some doubt as to how completely Sudanese leaders support the Egyptian position on the new constitution. However, all observers in the Sudan agree that the British face possible outbreaks of violence because Sudanese leaders want more independence than provided for in the original British draft and are not interested in the safeguards Britain is now trying to arrange.

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