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FAR EAST

1. Rhee presents new demands for reopening talks with Japan:

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[Redacted] President Rhee advised Ambassador Briggs on 1 November that his agreement to resume talks with Japan with American observers present would be

subject to a prior public apology by Japan for statements made by its representative during past negotiations. The statements allegedly questioned the legality of Korea's independence. Rhee also stated that the talks could not resume until Japan accepts Korea's "minimum demands."

Comment: While the Japanese have indicated a willingness to renounce their property claims in Korea and return some disputed Korean art treasures in order to get the talks under way, Rhee's minimum demands, in effect, call for Japan to concede virtually every issue in advance.

Yoshida has ordered retaliatory measures against Korea, but he is willing to withhold action if progress can be made toward reopening the negotiations.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

2. Indonesian president critical of American policies:

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[Redacted] In a recent conversation [Redacted] President Sukarno was frequently critical of Washington's policies, specifically those regarding Indochina, but made no reference to Moscow's or Peiping's policies. He seemed convinced that the United States supports colonialism. He said that it is unreasonable to expect Indonesia to be anti-Communist, emphasizing that his country is non-Communist and that he saw no reason for it to be otherwise.

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[Redacted] 4 Nov 53

Comment: Sukarno apparently believes he can handle any internal Communist threat even to the extent of maneuvering Communists in and out of the government as suits his purpose. The present leftist government, which includes Communist sympathizers, appears to have his strong support.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. Syria may ask destruction of Israeli Jordan River project:

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[redacted] According to the American ambassador in Damascus, Syria will probably demand a UN resolution calling for destruction of the work already completed in the demilitarized zone on the Israeli project to divert water from the Jordan River.

Comment: Previously Syria warned that Israel would complete its project before it would comply with UN directives and would then point to the work accomplished as reason for not destroying the canal.

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[redacted] the canal, even though unfinished, is already usable.

Israeli ambassador Eban told Ambassador Lodge in New York that when work is resumed in April 1954, after the rains, sections of the canal in the demilitarized zone will be completed in two months.

LATIN AMERICA

4. British Honduras election postponed because of reported Communist danger:

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[redacted] reports that the forthcoming general election in British Honduras has been postponed because of the probability that Communist elements would gain control of the government.

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The situation is not considered serious, however.

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Comment: This election, which was scheduled for February 1954 after an earlier postponement, was to have filled the majority of seats in the Legislative Council. A new constitution similar to that recently suspended in British Guiana was to have been inaugurated at the same time. Britain announced last February, however, that the elections might be still further postponed.

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This British decision increases the probability that Latin American anticolonial sentiment, already aroused by events in British Guiana, may find expression at the United Nations.

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