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17 May 1961

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CENTRAL

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BULLETIN



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Japan: [A decision by Japan's ruling Liberal-Democratic party (LDP) on 15 May calls for a US-Japanese conference on Okinawan welfare. This may increase the pressure on Prime Minister Ikeda to urge enlarging Japanese administrative participation in the Ryukyus when he comes to Washington in mid-June. Two LDP committees, after hearing a delegation of Ryukyuan legislators, adopted a policy statement favoring greater autonomy for the Ryukyuan government and integration of Japanese and Ryukyuan administrative functions. Leftist organizations in both Japan and Okinawa have requested travel permits for their members to make exchange visits to focus public attention on the Okinawan issue prior to Ikeda's departure.]

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Lebanon: The resignation of Prime Minister Salam and his 17-member cabinet on 16 May gives President Shihab an opportunity to select a smaller, more efficient group less troubled by the internal dissension which handicapped its predecessor. Salam's unwieldy cabinet, which had served since last August, was widely criticized for its lack of accomplishments, and its resignation has been expected for some time. Salam, however, remains a likely candidate for the premiership in the new government.

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*Albania: Ten alleged Albanian agents of the US, Greece, and Yugoslavia were put on public trial on 15 May in connection with an abortive attempt last year to overthrow the Hoxha regime, first publicly mentioned at the February congress of the Albanian Workers' (Communist) party.

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[redacted] Summaries of the first day's activities carried by the Albanian domestic radio service dramatized Albanian claims of US, Greek, and Yugoslav hostility and subversion over the last decade against the Tirana government. The regime apparently hopes to use the trial to justify its long-standing anti-Yugoslav position and to demonstrate to the Soviet bloc the error of its current policy of maintaining normal state relations with Yugoslavia. Criticism of Moscow's 1955-57 rapprochement with Belgrade is implicit in the indictment.

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Okinawan Issue Grows in Japan

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[The statement by the Foreign Affairs Research Council and Okinawan Problems Committee of the Liberal-Democratic party (LDP) supports popular election of the Ryukyuan chief executive, now appointed by the US High Commissioner; increased US aid to Okinawa; US-Japanese cooperation to improve a social security system and facilities for economic development in the Ryukyus; and integration of Okinawan and Japanese elections. In its election platform last fall the LDP had confined its policy statement on Okinawa to a general expression of sentiment in favor of US-Japanese cooperation to raise Ryukyuan living standards.]

[Chief Cabinet Secretary Masayoshi Ohira reportedly assured a visiting delegation of Okinawan legislators on 9 May that Ikeda would discuss problems of administrative rights and missile stockpiling in the Ryukyus with US leaders during his visit next month. The legislators, representing the two major Okinawan parties, were appointed by the Ryukyuan legislature to present to Ikeda a resolution calling for Okinawan representation in the Japanese Diet, opposition to bringing Mace short-range missiles to Okinawa, and the continuation of Japanese assistance in teacher training.]

[Officials of the Foreign Ministry continue to maintain they are doing their best to discourage partisan attempts to make Okinawan relations a more active issue in Japan. They have reportedly tried to dissuade the Legislative Secretariat of the Diet from further study of the legality of Okinawan participation in the Diet. However, Foreign Minister Kosaka recently renewed Tokyo's request that a tripartite council be established to handle matters concerning Japan, the US, and the Ryukyus. Popular sentiment for closer relations with Okinawa may reach a point where Ikeda would be expected to report some progress following his return from Washington.]

[Arrangements are being made for a small delegation of Foreign Ministry officials and Diet members representing the three major parties to visit Okinawa as guests of the US High Commissioner before Ikeda leaves for the US.]

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