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GENERAL

1. Eden ready to end Geneva talks and start on Southeast Asian defense planning:

Foreign Secretary Eden told the British Cabinet last week end that an attempt should be made to end the Geneva conference within the next ten days, according to Permanent

Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs Kirkpatrick. Eden believes France's vacillating tactics have so encouraged the Communists that any agreement at Geneva is most unlikely.

According to Kirkpatrick, Eden is now ready to move forward more rapidly with formation of a Southeast Asian collective defense system. He is somewhat optimistic that Burma will participate, and believes India might adopt an attitude of "semibenevolent" neutrality.

Comment: Eden has enjoyed almost unanimous approval in Britain for his determined effort to induce the Communists to negotiate, and can probably count on continued support after Geneva for a stronger policy on Asian questions.

2.

SOVIET UNION

3. Soviet press publishes alphabetical listing of top leaders:

Ambassador Bohlen reports that Soviet press accounts of the opening of the Trade Union Congress in Moscow on 7 June have listed party presidium members alphabetically instead of in the usual order of precedence. He notes this may be designed merely to emphasize the principle of collectivity. Bohlen believes if this becomes standard practice, it will deprive Malenkov of another of his few remaining attributes of pre-eminence within that group.

Bohlen points out, however, he does not believe the order of listings possesses the same conclusive significance as in Stalin's time.

Comment: This use of an alphabetical listing of the Soviet leaders, a striking departure from previous practice, appears to signify a further weakening of Malenkov's position and suggests that stresses within the ruling group have now resulted in an inability to agree on precedence of listing.

Prior to the recent activities of, and the publicity accorded to party first secretary Khrushchev, Malenkov appeared to hold the position of "first among equals" in the Soviet collective leadership. However, recent events have suggested a modification of the old collective leadership concept and the possible development of factional groupings within the leadership, focusing around Malenkov and Khrushchev.

FAR EAST

4. South Korea to attack American Asian policy at Chinhae conference:

The chief South Korean delegate to the Chinhae anti-Communist conference, scheduled to convene on 15 June, has

informed the South Korean press that the conference will "principally point out contradictions in America's Asia policy," according to the American embassy in Seoul. The conference will also consider the extent to which "America's policy of industrializing Japan" is hampering the development of Asian nations.

Comment: This report confirms information received from Chinese Nationalist foreign minister Yeh that the conference will feature a speech by President Rhee "blasting" Japan and possibly criticizing the United States and the Philippines.

Rhee's primary purpose apparently is to influence American opinion toward supporting an anti-Communist front of small nations as an alternative to Japan as a basis for the American position in Asia.

5.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA

6. Laos government plans appeal to United Nations:

The acting foreign minister of Laos informed the American chargé in Vientiane on 7 June his government had decided to make its own separate appeal to the United Nations, as distinct from the recent Thai appeal, in order to clarify the foreign character of the Viet Minh aggression.

Comment: The Laotian government has favored United Nations consideration of its problem since the time of the first large-scale Viet Minh invasion in April 1953, but has been dissuaded by French authorities from taking such action.

The opposition recently expressed by the French UN delegate toward the Thai proposal to send a Peace Observation Commission team to Laos and Cambodia probably influenced the Laotians to make their own appeal.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

7. Syrian cabinet reported to have submitted resignation:

Syria's Prime Minister Sabri Asali submitted his cabinet's resignation on 9 June because of attacks from political opponents and some elements of the army,

Political independents are trying to form a new cabinet which would conduct the promised--but still unscheduled--parliamentary elections.

if the independents fail or if the resignation is withdrawn, an army coup may occur. army factions nearly clashed in Damascus on 3 June in a dispute over army interference in politics. Assistant Chief of Staff Adnan Malki was the leader of one of these factions.

[Redacted]

There is little likelihood that the independents would be more successful than the present coalition cabinet in setting up a stable government.

Malki is one of the most popular and influential army officers and is alleged to be a supporter of Akram Hawrani, extreme Socialist leader [Redacted] Malki recently threatened Minister of Defense Dawalibi with trouble if restrictions were placed on the army.

WESTERN EUROPE

8. Reduction in Belgian defense forces seen:

[Redacted]

Belgian finance minister Liebaert told Ambassador Alger on 7 June he believes it is a "waste of money" to build up Belgium's forces unless West Germany is rearmed.

Both Liebaert and Defense Minister Spinoy said it will be financially impossible for Belgium to meet the costs of its NATO commitments, which are expected to rise to about \$480, 000, 000 a year by 1956. They think that by early 1956, Belgium will have to eliminate three wings from the air force and shift one infantry division to a reserve status.

Comment: This is the first time a Belgian official has been known to express such strong views on the need of West German rearmament.

Spinoy has already asked for a cut in the current defense budget. Any additional cuts, coupled with the recent reduction in the conscription period, would make it impossible for Belgium to fulfill its NATO commitment of six divisions by 1956.

LATIN AMERICA**9. Required majority agrees to OAS meeting on Guatemala:**

According to the American ambassadors in Uruguay and Bolivia, those countries now agree in principle to support a meeting of the Organization of American States on the Guatemalan problem but feel that the language of the resolution proposed by the United States on 5 June is "too hard."

Comment: This brings to 15 the number of governments committed in principle to a meeting. This is one more than the minimum required to make decisions under the 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance.

The objections to the language of the current proposal, however, underscore the continuing problem of gaining 14 commitments for specific action. Panama has also questioned the present text, and other objections are probable.